

2009 Annual Operating Instructions
Fall Creek/Whitebird and
Jacks Creek C&H Allotments
New Meadows Ranger District, Payette National Forest

The annual operating instructions are a guide for implementing grazing management activities on the Fall Creek/Whitebird and Jacks Creek Cattle allotments for the 2009 grazing season. These instructions were developed with the participation of the livestock permittee on April 29, 2009. Those involved in developing this plan are:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>
1. <u>Aaron Wilson</u>	<u>Permittee</u>
2. <u>Pete Grinde</u>	<u>Range Specialist</u>
3. <u>Brian McMorris</u>	<u>Range Specialist</u>
4. <u>Rick Belnap</u>	<u>Idaho Dept. of Lands</u>

These instructions are a guideline for grazing management. Any changes in management from these instructions require approval by the Forest Service prior to implementation. Refer to Part 2 of your term grazing permit for general terms and conditions that apply to these operating instructions.

Grazing fees of \$1.35/HM must be paid prior to livestock entering the National Forest. The New Meadows District Office must receive confirmation from Lockbox that payment has been made prior to cattle entering the Forest.

2009 AUTHORIZED USE

<u>PERMITTEE</u>	<u>LIVESTOCK NUMBERS</u>	<u>SEASON</u>	<u>ALLOTMENT</u>
Cross O Ranch	Non-Use (Personal Convenience)	6/10- 10/31	Fall Cr./Whitebird
Cross O Ranch	420 cow/calf pairs	7/11- 10/10	Jacks Creek

TERMS AND CONDITIONS PERTAINING TO SEASON OF USE AND LIVESTOCK NUMBERS

The District Ranger may modify the season of use and livestock numbers permitted on any given year. The season of use is especially dependent upon weather conditions (annual precipitation) which influences annual forage production and range readiness. The District Ranger's authority to modify term grazing permitted use is further described in Part 2, Section 8 (c) of your permit.

GRAZING PRESCRIPTION AND LIVESTOCK ROTATIONS

Turn out will not occur prior to range readiness. Range readiness is measured by soil moisture and plant growth. Soils may be damp, but not saturated, and should be firm to avoid excessive compaction due to livestock. Grass species other than bulbous bluegrass and cheatgrass must be a minimum of 6 inches in height and out of the boot stage.

The grazing prescriptions are designed to meet the resource needs of the soils and vegetation. Fisheries biologists have completed Biological Assessments on this grazing activity for Chinook salmon, steelhead trout, and bull trout (species listed under the Endangered Species Act).

The known or potential problem areas have been identified below along with the respective mitigation measures designed to eliminate each adverse effect.

<u>Resource</u>	<u>Mitigation</u>
1. Chinook spawning area below falls on Hazard Creek in the Jacks Creek Allotment.	Close Hazard Creek riparian area below falls to cattle grazing.

The uplands have a 40% allowable use limit, and riparian areas are limited to 30% use, or 4 inch stubble height of hydric greenline species.

Salt placement is required to be at least 1/4 mile from water. If this can't be accomplished, the New Meadows District range personnel will work with you to find acceptable locations. All salt blocks shall be removed when livestock have been moved out of a unit or off National Forest Land.

Jacks Creek Allotment Rotation

The allotment is to be managed under a two pasture grazing rotation as designated in the allotment management plan.

It is the permittees' responsibility to keep cattle off of the Forest until range readiness. Cattle are to be turned out into the Elk Lake Unit once range readiness conditions are met. Livestock are not authorized on the allotment until the division fence is maintained and up.

Cattle are to be moved to the Rainbow Lake Unit once any of the three allowable use criteria are reached in the Elk Lake Unit. The Clayburn boundary fence needs to be in place prior to the move. The Rainbow Lake Unit is intended to be grazed after seed ripe on the vegetation. This will be approximately August 20th. Cattle are to be removed from the allotment once any one of the three allowable use criteria are reached in the Rainbow Lake Unit or by the October 10th off date.

Fall Creek/Whitebird Ridge Allotment Rotation

Non-Use personal convenience full numbers. Second year in a row.

Livestock Trailing

Cattle are to be trailed onto and off of the Jacks Creek allotment.

MAINTENANCE OF RANGE IMPROVEMENTS

All range improvements must be maintained prior to turning livestock into the Unit scheduled for use. If an existing range improvement has been properly maintained but requires reconstruction, a cooperative effort can be made between the Forest Service and permittee to reconstruct the development depending on funding. The permittee is required to provide the materials and labor during routine maintenance. It is your responsibility to maintain the allotment boundary fence on the east side of the Jacks Creek cattle allotment (Clayburn fence). This fence must be up before cattle enter the Rainbow Lake Unit.

Maintenance of spring developments is vitally important to the health of your livestock and to the grazing allotment. There are many developments on the Fall Creek Whitebird allotment that need extensive maintenance or reconstruction. These need to be scheduled and completed in order to remain in compliance with your term grazing permit. The maintenance and reconstruction will be scheduled over several years as funds permit. All water developments which utilize a storage tank must have a wildlife escape ramp installed.

The Forest Service and permittee will look to see if there is still a spring at the end of the lower Wildhorse Saddle Road south past the gate. Reconstruction of this spring development is not planned at this time, and is dependant on available funding. The Forest Service would provide the materials and the permittee would provide the labor for this project.

The Horse Corral Spring will be rebuilt this year if time and funding permit, but if not rebuilt this year it will be planned for reconstruction in 2010. The permittee will provide a tire for the tank and labor. The Forest Service will provide the rest of the materials (everything but the tire).

The Forest Service and permittee will look at building a corral on Whitebird Ridge for Permittee to truck on and off the Forest. This project is not funded for 2009, but will be funded as soon as possible. The corral and chute have been approved by the Nezperce Forest to be built where the existing horse corral is. Also there has been approval to widen the road around the corral for a truck and trailer turnaround. It will be the permittees responsibility to widen the road.

The Forest Service and Permittee will look at rebuilding the east part of the Lockwood Drift fence. The Forest Service will supply the materials and the permittee will supply the labor. This will take place in 2010 depending on time and funding.

MONITORING OF THE ANNUAL LIVESTOCK GRAZING ACTIVITY

We are requesting you to report actual use information for each unit grazed. If you have any questions about completing the form, please call the Range Department at the Forest Service at (208) 347-0300. We request the forms be returned no later than February 1, 2010.

SPECIAL MANAGEMENT

In the event a designated mitigation measure fails to protect a species listed under the Endangered Species Act, a change in authorized grazing activity will occur. If proper use

grazing levels are reached then livestock are to be moved to the next grazing unit or off of the allotment. If livestock grazing does not comply with the terms and conditions of these Annual Operating Instructions, then Forest Service policy and procedures regarding administrative permit actions will be followed.

You are responsible for ensuring that your rider is informed and understands the standards, guidelines, and other management direction in this plan.

/s/ Kimberly A. Brandel
Kimberly A. Brandel
District Ranger

4/30/2009
Date

/s/ Aaron Wilson
Cross O Ranch, Inc.
Permittee

5/11/2009
Date